

CONDITIONS & TRENDS

Overview

The purpose of presenting the information in this Booklet is to provide the PZC and residents with a common foundation of information to use during the planning process.

Historical Perspective

Ellington was first inhabited by Native American tribes. One of their ancient settlements was located on the eastern side of present day Crystal Lake. Originally part of Windsor, then East Windsor, Ellington was incorporated in 1786.

The principal element of Ellington's economy in these early days was agriculture. Additional elements of the economy emerged, starting in colonial times, with the advent of water power. Broad Brook and the Hockanum River provided power for a variety of mills, to include saw mills, grist mills, and cotton mills. The industrial revolution and its accompanying use of steam and electrical power allowed the early mills to become more efficient and productive. The importance of the mills declined during the early part of the 20th Century. This was due in part to competition from other mills.

Throughout the 19th Century and up to the 1940s, Ellington's population growth was relatively flat, hovering around 1,000 inhabitants. Significant population growth occurred in the post World War II years.

Today, Ellington is a community of over 13,000 people. Its school system and governmental services are well regarded, as is the rural character of the Town. Ellington will experience continued growth over the coming decades and it is both timely and appropriate that its Plan of Conservation and Development be updated.

*"If we could first
know where we
are, and whither
we are tending, we
could better judge
what to do, and
how to do it."*

Abraham Lincoln

Ellington Population

YEAR	PEOPLE
1790	1,056
1800	1,209
1810	1,344
1820	1,196
1830	1,455
1840	1,356
1850	1,399
1860	1,510
1870	1,452
1880	1,569
1890	1,539
1900	1,829
1910	1,999
1920	2,127
1930	2,253
1940	2,479
1950	3,099
1960	5,580
1970	7,707
1980	9,711
1990	11,197
2000	12,921
2010	14,429
2020	15,637
2030	16,567

1790 to 2000 – US Census

Population Projections

Projecting growth can be difficult due to changing conditions that may affect future migration or natural growth.

The population projections used in this report are based strictly on census data and assume that either the rate of growth or number of people per decade will mimic the growth that occurred between 1990 and 2000. The **rate** of growth was 15% in the 1990s and the **amount** of population growth in the 1990s was 1,724 additional people.

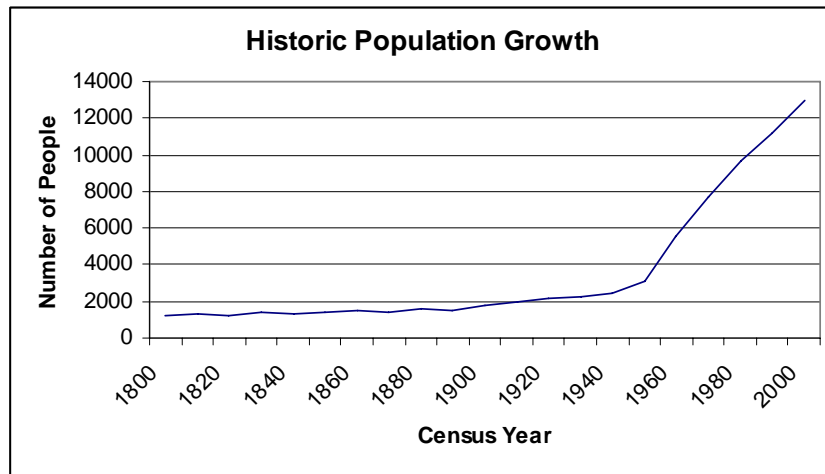
Population Growth and Changes

Ellington is Growing Faster than the State or the County...

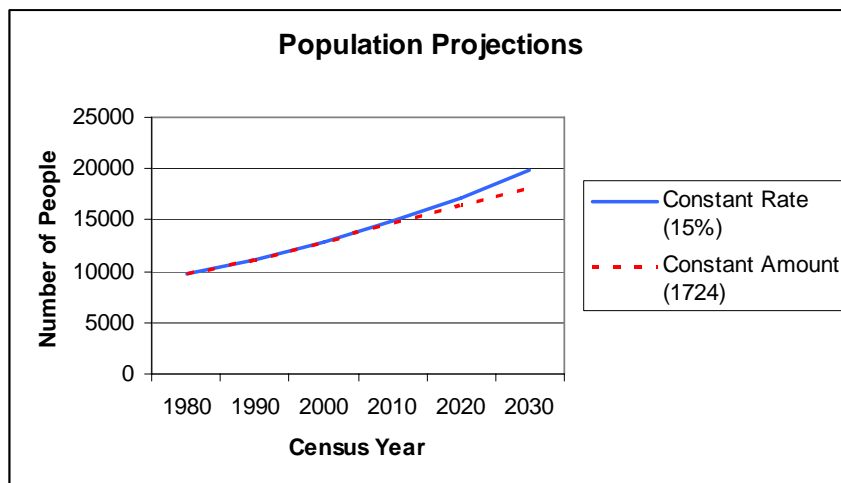
As noted in the graph below, population in Ellington was stable for more than 100 years, with no significant change in population until the 1950's. Population growth in the last sixty years has accelerated and projections show that population growth will continue through 2020.

According to the Census Bureau, in 2000, Ellington had a population of 12,921, which represented a 15.4% rate of growth from 1990. This rate of growth was significantly larger than either the rest of Tolland County, which had a rate of growth of approximately 6%, or the State, which had approximately a 4% rate of growth during the same period. US Census estimates for 2004 put Ellington at a population of 14,151.

Population Change (1800 to 2000)



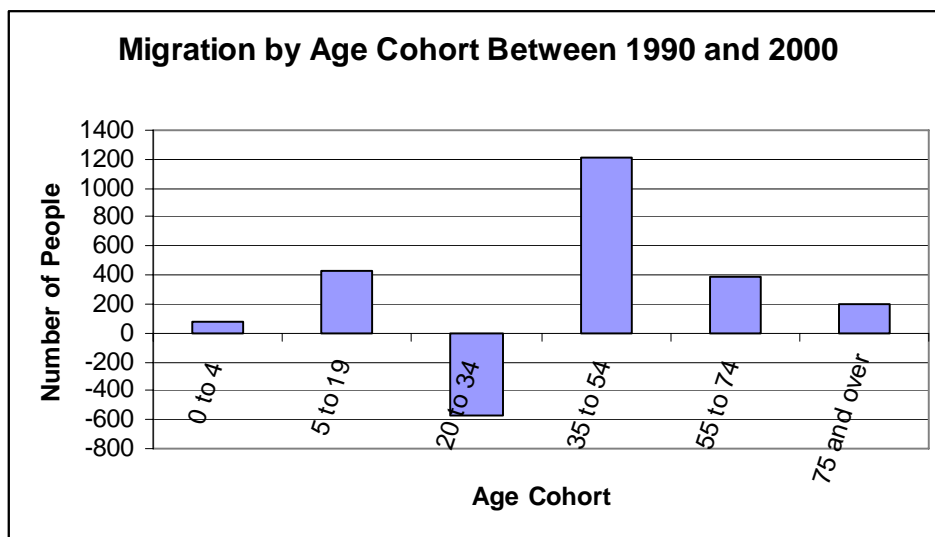
Projections to the year 2030, based on a constant amount of growth, show a population of 16,567, or an average decade based growth rate of 9.9%.



Age Composition is Also Changing...

One indicator of the aging of the population is the median age, a statistic provided by the Census. The sidebars at the right provide median age for Ellington since 1970 and compare Ellington's median age with the County and neighboring communities. According to the US Census, the median age in Ellington has increased from 26 in 1970 to 37 in 2000. This trend is seen throughout the country, due to the aging of the "baby boom" generation (people born between 1946 and 1964).

Another factor that affects local populations is the migration patterns of specific age groups. The chart, *Migration by Age Cohort between 1990 and 2000*, and the table, *Net Migration 1990 – 2000*, illustrate the migration patterns in Ellington between 1990 and 2000. This data shows that in the 1990's there was a net out migration of 572 people from Ellington in the 20 to 34 year old age cohort. The age cohort with the largest net in-migration is the 35- to 54-year age cohort.



Source: US Census

The continued in-migration of mature adults and senior residents is somewhat unusual in that many communities consistently exhibit out-migration patterns beginning around age 45 and continuing in many cases to 85 years of age and beyond. The overall growth in these age groups is attributable, in part, to people living longer and healthier lives.

By the year 2030, adults aged 55 and older will likely comprise approximately thirty-two percent (32%) of the total population, up from only fifteen percent (15%) in 1980.

Median Age

Ellington 1970 - 2000

1970	26
1980	30
1990	33
2000	37

Regional Median Age

Place	Median Age
East Windsor	39
South Windsor	39
Stafford	38
Vernon	38
Ellington	37
Enfield	37
Somers	37
Tolland County	36

Source: U.S. Census

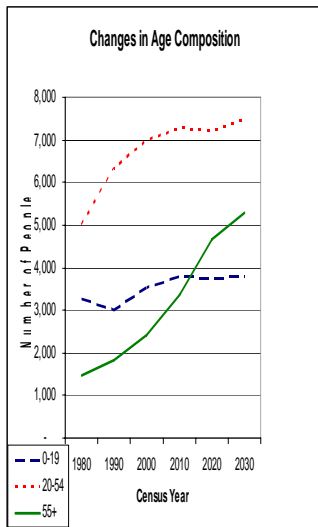
Net Migration 1990 – 2000

Age Cohort	Number of People
0-4	76
5-19	426
20-34	-572
35-54	1211
55-74	384
75+	202

While overall population growth is important, changes in age composition may actually have more far-reaching implications, both in terms of future housing choices and community service demands. Major changes in the demographic make-up of a community can translate into major changes in the needs of the community over time. The table, *Age Cohort by Percent of Population*, identifies likely changes in the make-up of the population in Ellington by 2030.

Age Cohort by Percent of Population						
Age Cohort	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020	2030
0 to 4	7%	7%	6%	6%	5%	5%
5 to 19	26%	20%	21%	20%	19%	18%
20 to 34	28%	27%	19%	17%	19%	18%
35 to 54	24%	29%	35%	33%	27%	27%
55 to 74	13%	13%	14%	19%	24%	24%
75 and over	2%	3%	4%	5%	6%	8%
Total Percent	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total Pop.	9,711	11,197	12,921	14,429	15,637	16,567

Source: US Census



Different age cohorts typically have different specific needs. The chart, *Changes in Age Composition*, based on census and migration data, shows the fastest growing segment of the population in Ellington is likely to be those adults aged 55 and older. It also shows that the school-aged population is not likely to increase significantly.

The following table depicts the various age cohorts of Ellington residents, each of which will have specific needs during the next twenty years. While the relative size of any cohort may be greater (or less) of the total population in 2030 than it is today, the actual number of individuals in each cohort will be greater.

Age Cohort	Age Range	Needs	Projection to 2020
Infants	0 to 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Care • Recreation Program 	Higher by 2020
School-Age	5 to 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Facilities • Recreation Facilities • Active Recreation Programs 	Peaks in 2010
Young Adults	20 to 34	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rental Housing • Starter Homes • Social Destinations 	Higher by 2020
Middle Age	35 to 54	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Programs • Trade-Up Homes 	Peaks in 2010
Mature Adults	55 to 74	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller Homes • Second Homes • Passive Recreation Programs 	Growth through 2030
Retirement Age	75 and over	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tax Relief • Housing Options • Senior Programs 	Much Higher by 2020

Housing the Population

Housing Growth is Expected to Continue ...

The number of new housing units has been increasing since 1990 at a much faster rate in Ellington than in the neighboring communities. According to the Census Bureau, Ellington added an average of 86 housing units per year between 1990 and 2000, representing a growth rate of 18%, far exceeding the State housing growth rate of 5% during that same period. Since 2000, the Town has issued 595 building permits for new housing units, representing an annual rate of 99 new housing units per year for the past six years.

Household Size is Shrinking...

The size of the average household in Ellington, as well as in the County and the State, has been decreasing over time. Historical data on declining household size indicates a greater number of single person households as well as societal choices affecting the number of children per family.

Rental occupancies are growing...

Rental units in Ellington account for 30 percent, or almost one-third (1/3) of all occupied units. Rentals in Ellington have increased significantly since 1990, up almost 29 percent.

Percent Rentals in 2000

Source: US Census

Vernon	43%
East Windsor	35%
Willington	34%
State	31%
Ellington	30%
Stafford	25%
Enfield	24%
Sommers	13%
South Windsor	11%

The relatively high percentage of rental units indicates a wider choice in rental housing available to potential Ellington residents.

The differing demographics of owner versus rental occupied housing are also of interest. Per the 2000 Census, the average number of persons in an owner occupied unit is 2.81, whereas the average in a rental unit is 1.76. Approximately 82% of owner occupied units are family households, i.e., related individuals. In rental occupied units, 36.1% are occupied by family households.

Housing in Ellington	
Total Housing Units	
1990	4,562
2000	5,417
Percent Increase	18%
Owner Occupied	
1990	3,019
2000	3,572
Percent Increase	18%
Percent Owner Occupied 2000	70%
Renter Occupied	
1990	1,263
2000	1,623
Percent Increase	29%
Percent Renter Occupied 2000	30%

Average Household Size

	1980	1990	2000
State	2.76	2.6	2.5
County		2.7	2.6
Town	2.97	2.6	2.5

Source: US Census

Housing Units

	Total # of Units	Average Annual Rate
1980	3486	
1990	4562	108
2000	5417	86
2005	6210	132

Source: Building Permit Data

Median Home Value

Location	Median Value of All Owner-Occupied Units
Enfield	123,500
Stafford	127,500
East Windsor	129,800
Vernon	131,100
Willington	144,000
Ellington	156,300
South Windsor	162,700
Somers	193,900
Tolland	
County	150,500
State	166,900

Ellington's Housing Stock is Relatively Affordable...

While Ellington's housing stock is relatively affordable in comparison with neighboring communities, the County and the State, a relatively affordable mortgage or rent alone does not qualify a housing unit as affordable by the State standards contained in Section 8-30g of the Connecticut General Statutes.

Under the State's affordable housing regulations, codified in CGS 8-30g, until 10% of a community's housing stock is guaranteed as affordable, it is subject to an affordable housing appeals procedure that shifts the burden of proof to the community to show that threats to public health or safety outweigh the need for affordable housing. In order to qualify as an affordable unit under CGS 8-30g, a dwelling must be:

- assisted housing (funded under a state or federal program;
- CHFA-financed housing (financed under a program for income-qualifying persons or families); or
- housing that is deed restricted to be affordable to low- or moderate-income persons or families for at least 40 years.

According to the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (CDECD), 6.3% of Ellington's housing is affordable under the requirements of CGS 8-30g.

According to Census data on the percent of income spent on housing costs, Ellington's housing is relatively affordable with renters spending approximately 21 percent of their annual income on rent and home owners spending approximately 20 percent of their annual income on housing costs, primarily mortgage payments. Ellington's rental housing is slightly more affordable than the State or County averages. Ellington is very similar to the State and County averages for owner-occupied housing costs.

Percent of Income Spent on Housing Costs		
	Rent as percentage of Income	Owner Occupied Housing costs as Percentage of Income
State	25.4 %	20.1%
Tolland County	24.2%	19.2%
Ellington	21.1%	19.6%

Ellington's Economy

According to the 2000 Census, there were 7065 workers, aged 16 and older, who lived in Ellington. The Census also showed that there were 2,641 jobs in Ellington. This gave Ellington a 1 to 3 ratio of jobs to workers, characterizing it as a bedroom community in that it is a net exporter of workers.

In 2005, there were 2,621 jobs in Ellington, in 486 firms. With an average of five (5) workers per firm, Ellington's businesses are primarily small businesses.

Business Profile (2005)				
Sector	Firms	% of Total	Employees	% of Total
Agriculture	36	7.4%	191	7.3%
Construction and Mining	101	20.8%	361	13.8%
Manufacturing	26	5.3%	337	12.9%
Transportation and Utilities	15	3.1%	264	10.1%
Trade	91	18.7%	537	20.5%
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	27	5.6%	105	4.0%
Services	164	33.7%	635	24.2%
Government	5	1.0%	190	7.2%
Total	486	100%	2,621	100%

Source: Connecticut Department of Labor

As can be seen from the above data, the service sector is the most significant in terms of number of firms and employees. Other significant employment sectors include Trade, Construction and Mining, and Manufacturing. Four of the top 5 employers are in the manufacturing sector.

Data on Journey to Work in 2000 (2000 Census) showed that the top 5 commuting destinations for Ellington workers were Hartford, Vernon, Manchester, South Windsor, and East Hartford. The location of these communities along the I-84 corridor helps explain their prominence as commuter destinations. The top 5 locations for commuters coming to Ellington, notable for their proximity to Ellington, include Vernon, Stafford, Somers, Enfield, and South Windsor.

With \$62,405 as median household income, Ellington surpasses both state and county medians, and registers fourth among its neighboring communities. In terms of per capita income, Ellington is slightly less than the state figure and ranks 4th among its neighboring communities.

Top Five Employers

Country Pure Foods
Merrill Packaging
Rice Packaging
Accutime
Board of Education

Source: CDECD

Unemployment Rate February 2006

South Windsor	3.8
Willington	3.8
Ellington	4.3
Vernon	4.8
State	5.0
Somers	5.1
Enfield	5.3
Stafford	5.3
East Windsor	6.0

Source: Connecticut Department of Labor

1999 Median Household Income

Tolland	\$77,388
South Windsor	\$73,990
Sommers	\$65,273
Ellington	\$62,405
Tolland County	\$59,044
State	\$53,935
Enfield	\$52,810
Stafford	\$52,699
Willington	\$51,690
East Windsor	\$51,092
Vernon	\$47,816

Source: 2000 Census

Per Capita Income

South Windsor	\$30,966
Tolland	\$29,892
Sommers	\$29,128
State	\$28,766
Ellington	\$27,766
Willington	\$27,062
Tolland County	\$25,474
Vernon	\$25,150
East Windsor	\$24,899
Stafford	\$22,017
Enfield	\$21,967

Source: 2000 Census

Definitions

Developed Land - land that has buildings, structures, or improvements used for a particular economic or social purpose (such as residential or institutional)

Committed Land - land that is used for a particular economic or social purpose (including open space)

Vacant Land - land that is not developed or committed

Dedicated Open Space - land or development rights owned by the Federal government, the State, the Town, land trusts, or conservation organizations intended to remain for open space purposes.

Managed Open Space - land owned by fish and game clubs, cemeteries, recreational clubs, and other organizations which is used for other purposes but provides open space benefits.

Land Use in Ellington

Ellington contains approximately 22,138 acres (34.5 square miles) of area. The land use survey found that 9,703 acres or 41% of the land is either developed for residential, commercial, or industrial uses, or is committed to a specific use such as dedicated open space or town facilities.

Residential land (4,230 acres) accounts for 47% of total developed land. The next highest percentage is that of dedicated open space which accounts for 27% of total developed/committed land.

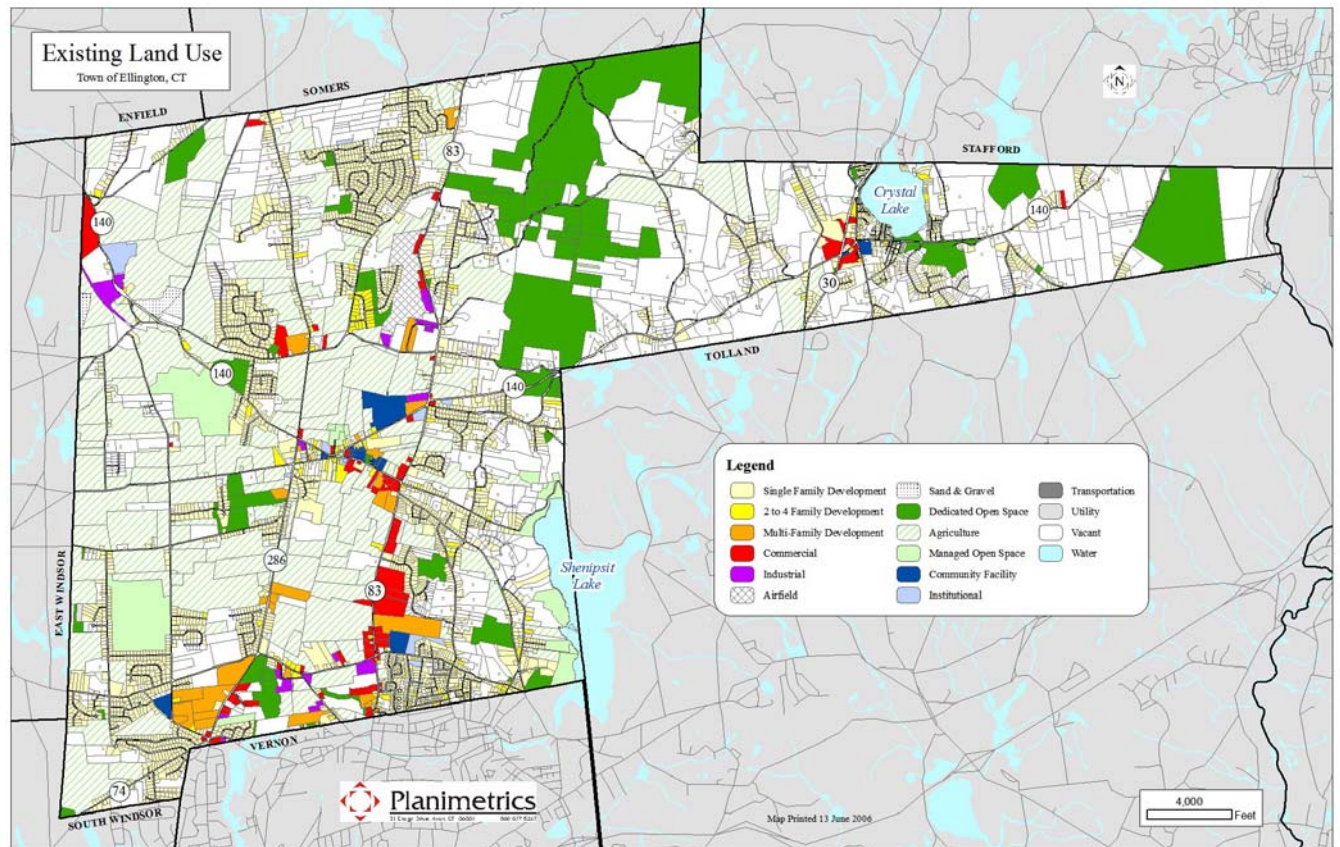
Forty one percent of the town (9,007 acres) is developed or committed to a specific use. Vacant or uncommitted land comprises approximately 59% of the town. Existing land use is shown on the map on the following page.

2005 Ellington Land Use Assessment

Use	Acres	Percent of Committed Land	Percent of Total Land
Dedicated Agriculture	360	7%	3%
Residential	4,230	47%	19%
Single Family	3,698	41%	17%
Multi-Family	342	4%	2%
2 – 4 Family	189	2%	1%
Commercial/Industrial	630	7%	3%
Commercial	339	4%	2%
Airfield	127	1%	1%
Industrial	104	1%	0%
Sand & Gravel	60	1%	0%
Dedicated Open Space	2,431	27%	11%
Institutional	247	3%	1%
Community Facilities	164	2%	1%
Institutional	83	1%	0%
Infrastructure	905	10%	4%
Roads	844	9%	4%
Utilities	61	1%	0%
Developed / Committed	9,073	100%	41%
Use	Acres	Percent of Uncommitted Land	Percent of Total Land
Agriculture	4,995	38%	23%
Managed Open Space	570	4%	3%
Vacant	7,117	54%	33%
Water	384	3%	2%
Total Vacant/Uncommitted	13,066	100%	59%
Total Land Area	22,139		100%

Source: Ellington Assessor's Office (Totals may not add due to rounding).

LAND USE MAP



Zoning in Ellington

The current zoning regulations are in the process of being re-formatted and reorganized. This discussion assumes adoption of the draft regulations as prepared for public hearing scheduled for the last week in May.

Ellington's zoning regulations encompass 6 residential zones, 4 commercial/industrial zones, and a flood plain district. Over 80% of Ellington is zoned for residential use. Four of the 6 residential zones (AA, A, RA, LR) deal primarily with single family uses and have almost identical lot area and yard requirements. The RA and the A Zones permit two-family dwellings provided that the proposed lot is a lot of record and it contains a minimum of 60,000 square feet. Multi-family dwellings are allowed as a Special Permit use in the MF Zone with a density of up to 5 per acre. A recent addition to the regulations, the Aged Restricted Cluster Housing Zone, allows multiple dwelling units with an overall density of up to 5 units per acre. This zone also has age restrictions (55 or older).

Acreage by Zone

Zone	Acres
AA	4,586
A	5,198
RA	7,259
LR	121
MF	395
C	337
PC	377
I	745
IP	188
OS*	1,645
Total**	20,851

*Not an active zone.

**Total may not add up due to rounding.

The Industrial and Industrial Park zones differ primarily on the basis of permitted uses, with the IP Zone being more restrictive. The same is true of the Commercial and Planned Commercial Zones.

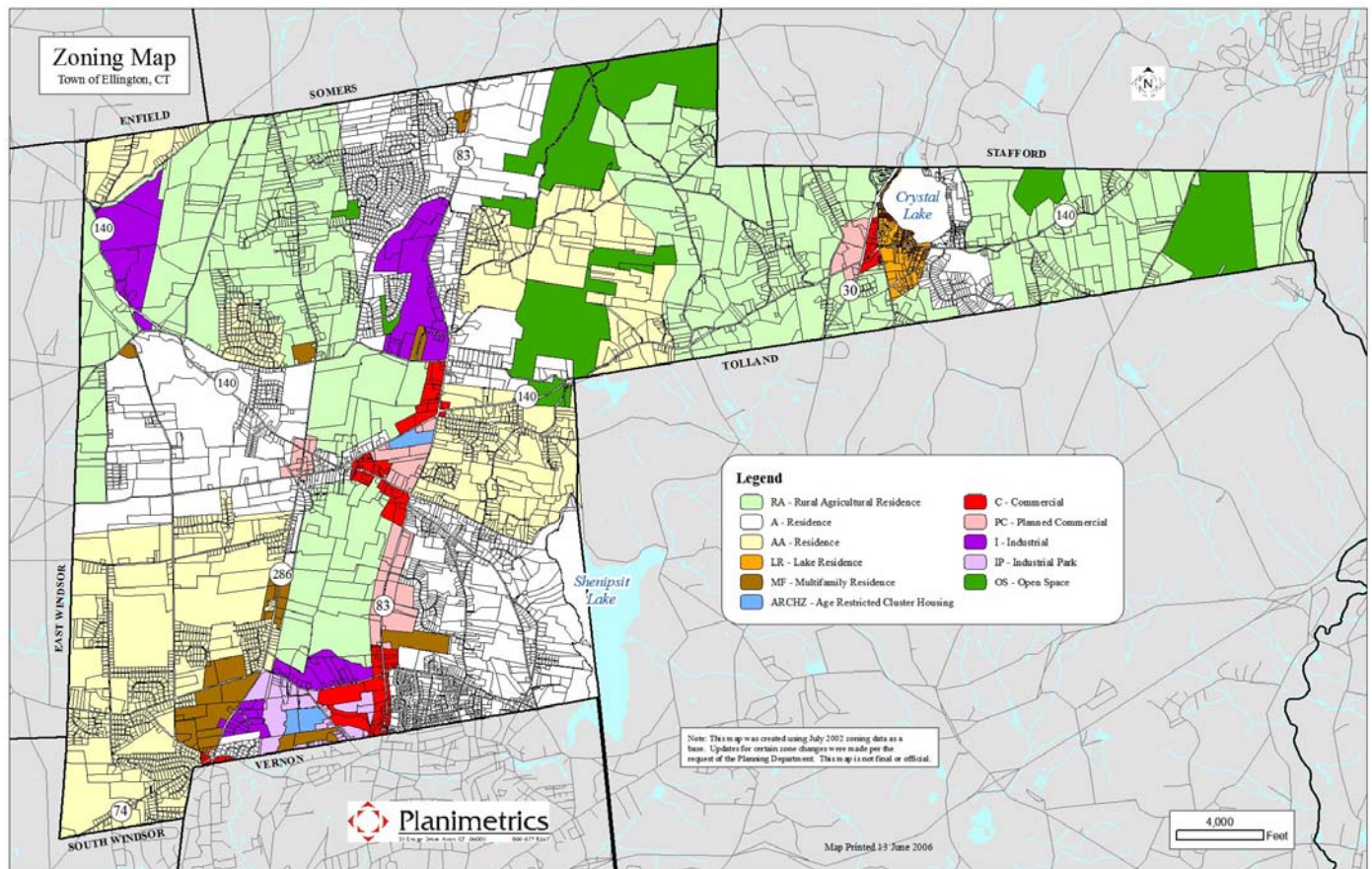
The Buildout Study completed in 2004 noted the current "One Size Fits All" lot requirement in the A, AA, RA, and LR needs to be modified. Basically, all of these zones require a minimum lot size of 40,000 square feet. However, topographical and soil conditions vary greatly throughout the town and minimum lot size should reflect this basic constraint. The Buildout Study recommended that outside of areas with public sewer availability that the minimum lot size vary between 80,000 and 100,000 square feet. The Plan supports this recommendation.

The Zoning Map and/or the Zoning regulations need to be updated relative to the Open Space Zone. This zone is shown on the Zoning Map, but it is not listed as a zone in the regulations. As shown on the Zoning Map, the OS Zone applies only to land owned by the State of Connecticut and the Town of Ellington. It is recommended that the standards incorporated into the text of the Open Space Zone address at least the following:

- Permitted uses should be restricted to recreation areas, parks and open space.
- Uses should be subject to site plan approval.
- Any structures must be in support of or accessory to the use of the land as recreation, parks, or open space.

The current Zoning Map is displayed on the facing page.

ZONING MAP



Development Potential in Ellington

The buildout population under current zoning would be approximately 37,000.

Modified zoning standards could result in a buildout population of 30,000 people.

The theoretical buildout for commercial and industrial development would be approximately 5.4 million square feet of building.

Market considerations, such as location and access, will be greater determinants of actual commercial/industrial buildout than will zoning.

A build out analysis was conducted by Planimetrics in April of 2004.

Using the Town's digital map system, total net buildable areas, by zone, for the entire town were developed. Total net buildable areas take into consideration zoning restrictions, natural resource constraints, and the availability of public water and sewer facilities. The net acreage was then multiplied by a factor (persons per unit) for residential, and a “floor area ratio” for commercial and industrial uses.

Residential Development Findings

According to the 2000 Census, Ellington had a population of 12,921 and a dwelling unit count of 5,195 with an average household size for owner-occupied units of 2.81. Population estimates prepared by the State put the 2002 population at 13,248. (DECD 2001-2002 Town Profiles) An analysis of vacant residentially zoned land showed that approximately 9,000 acres of net developable land are available. (See map on page 5 delineating vacant land.) This acreage would accommodate approximately 8,465 dwelling units resulting in an additional future population of 23,788. Thus the Town’s buildout population under the current zoning scheme would be approximately 37,000 people.

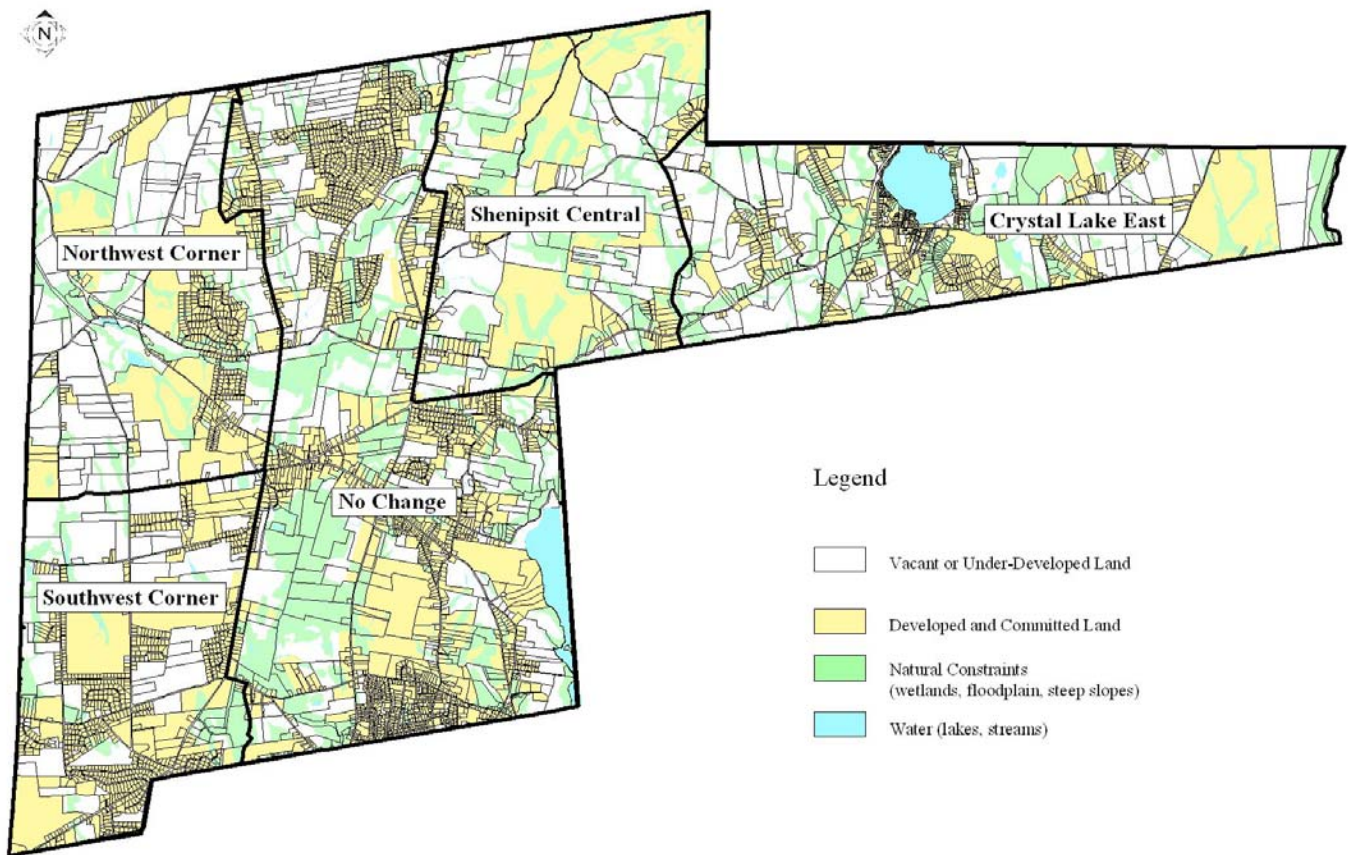
The buildout analysis also considered how the ultimate population of the Town might change if some of the basic zoning standards were to be modified. For example, the minimum lot size in all residential zones is 40,000 square feet. Modified zoning standards would require larger minimums in certain areas of town that have poor soil conditions or challenging topography. The use of modified zoning standards would result in a buildout population of approximately 30,000 or 7,000 persons less than the buildout population under existing zoning.

Commercial/Industrial Development Findings

The Assessor’s records showed that the total existing building area for commercial and industrial properties was 1.4 million square feet. This is located almost exclusively within a few areas including the Route 83 corridor, the airport area, the Windermere area, Nutmeg Park, and at Five Corners. Net buildable land available for commercial/industrial development was calculated to be 345 acres. Through the application of floor area ratios it was determined that the 345 acres of net buildable land could accommodate an additional 4 million square feet of commercial/industrial floor area. Thus the theoretical buildout for commercial/industrial development would be approximately 5.4 million square feet of building. Whether or not the long term development of commercial and industrial properties will approach this figure is speculative at best. It should be noted that market considerations, such as location and access, will be greater determinants of actual commercial/industrial buildout than will zoning.

The map on the facing page shows the sub-areas used in the Buildout Study, as well as the locations of vacant or under-developed land

Buildout Study Map



Ellington's 2002-03 education budget was almost identical to the statewide average as to dollar amounts. In both percentage figures and dollar amounts, Ellington spent noticeably less in the general government category as compared to the statewide average

Fiscal Overview

Expenditures

The following table shows that in Fiscal Year (FY) 2002-03, Ellington's total per capita expenditures were below average among Connecticut Communities. (2003 data is used because this is the latest year for which there is comparative data for all Connecticut municipalities.) Ellington's 2002-03 education budget was almost identical to the statewide average as to dollar amounts. In both percentage figures and dollar amounts, Ellington spent noticeably less in the general government category as compared to the statewide average.

2002-2003 Per Capita Expenditures Distribution

Budgeted Expenditures	Ellington		Connecticut	
Education	\$1,522	65.7%	\$1,521	57.8%
General Government	\$647	27.9%	\$910	34.6%
Debt Service	\$147	6.3%	\$201	7.6%
Total Expenditures	\$2,316	100%	\$2,632	100%

Source: Connecticut Policy and Economic Council

Ellington ranks 6th among nine neighboring communities and 124th out of 169 communities statewide in terms of total expenditures per capita. Among neighboring communities, Ellington ranks 5th in education expenditures, 4th in general government expenditures, and 1st in debt service. High debt service expenditures are attributable in part to recent school facility expansions.

Compared with neighboring towns, Ellington's per capita expenditures are in the lower sector, that is, there are 5 towns that spend more per capita, and 3 towns that spend less.

2002-03 Per Capita Expenditures Comparison
(ranked by total expenditures)

	Education	General Expenditures	Debt Service	Total Expenditures	Rank
Vernon	\$1,322	\$703	\$107	\$2,133	154
Somerset	\$1,343	\$492	\$226	\$2,063	161
Enfield	\$1,354	\$746	\$82	\$2,184	146
Ellington	\$1,369	\$723	\$323	\$2,415	124
East Windsor	\$1,372	\$854	\$154	\$2,386	109
Willington	\$1,465	\$458	\$66	\$1,990	164
Stafford	\$1,636	\$609	\$217	\$2,462	95
Tolland	\$1,777	\$610	\$188	\$2,577	64
South Windsor	\$1,819	\$813	\$178	\$2,811	35
State	\$1,521	\$910	\$201	\$2,632	NA

Source: Connecticut Policy and Economic Council

Revenues

Revenues are the other half of the budget equation and provide the funding necessary to pay for expenditures. Ellington's per capita property taxes are less than the statewide average in terms of dollar amount and are close to the statewide average as a percentage of total revenues per capita.

2002-2003 Per Capita Revenue

Budgeted Revenues	Ellington		Connecticut	
Property Taxes	\$1,540	66.5%	\$1,792	68.1%
State Aid	\$663	28.6%	\$641	24.3%
Licenses, Charges & Fines	\$45	1.9%	\$85	3.2%
Surplus	\$20	0.9%	\$37	1.4%
Other Revenue	\$47	2.0%	\$78	3.0%
Total Revenues	\$2,315	100%	\$2,633	100%

Source: Connecticut Policy and Economic Council

The relatively high ranking (58) of the town in terms of Per Capita State Aid is reflective of the low productivity of the property tax as expressed by the Per Capita Revenue figures. Ellington ranks 4th among neighboring communities in property taxes per capita, and 3rd in terms of per capita state aid.

2002-03 Per Capita Revenue Comparison

(ranked by per capita property taxes)

	Per Capita Property Taxes	State Rank		Per Capita State Aid	Rank
South Windsor	\$2,198	43	Stafford	\$985	18
Tolland	\$1,840	72	Sommers	\$771	48
East Windsor	\$1,662	97	Ellington	\$663	58
Ellington	\$1,540	114	Tolland	\$661	59
Enfield	\$1,413	131	Vernon	\$642	64
Vernon	\$1,379	136	Enfield	\$614	70
Stafford	\$1,353	137	Willington	\$609	71
Willington	\$1,291	142	East Windsor	\$588	76
Sommers	\$1,167	153	South Windsor	\$485	89
State	\$1,792		State	\$641	

Source: Connecticut Policy and Economic Council

Tax Base

The per capita property tax figures used to this point are simply the total grand list divided by the total population. Businesses can comprise a significant portion of the grand list, often paying more in property tax than they require in services, thus reducing the tax burden of the average resident.

The range of difference in per capita property taxes among Ellington and its neighbors is \$532, with East Windsor the lowest at \$1,662, and South Windsor the highest at \$2,198.

Statewide average per capita property taxes are \$1,092 or 70% higher than Ellington's.

The following table shows that Ellington's businesses account for 16.7% of the total tax base, well below the statewide average. After accounting for the property taxes paid by businesses, Ellington's actual per capita tax burden falls to \$1,283.

2002-03 Per Capita Tax Burden

	Per Capita Property Taxes	Percent Business Tax Base	Actual Per Capita Tax Burden	Per Capita Income	Taxes as a % of Per Capita Income
South Windsor	\$2,198	23.9%	\$1,673	\$30,966	5.4%
Tolland	\$1,840	9.4%	\$1,667	\$29,892	5.6%
Ellington	\$1,540	16.7%	\$1,283	\$27,766	4.6%
Stafford	\$1,353	21.0%	\$1,069	\$22,017	4.9%
Sommers	\$1,167	8.9%	\$1,063	\$23,952	4.4%
Vernon	\$1,379	27.8%	\$996	\$25,150	4.0%
Enfield	\$1,413	30.7%	\$979	\$21,967	4.5%
Willington	\$1,291	25.3%	\$964	\$27,062	3.6%
East Windsor	\$1,662	42.0%	\$964	\$24,899	3.9%
State	\$2,632	24.4%	\$1,990	\$28,766	6.9%

Source: Connecticut Policy and Economic Council

To look at property taxes in terms of residents' ability to pay, divide the actual per capita tax burden by per capita income. The results indicate that Ellington's property taxes as a percentage of per capita income is below the statewide average and ranks the 6th among the nine neighboring communities.

Tax Base Comparison (2001)

	Per Capita ENGL	Rank
South Windsor	\$109,942	78
East Windsor	\$101,315	91
Tolland	\$93,240	103
Ellington	\$83,782	117
Sommers	\$83,113	118
Willington	\$81,660	122
Stafford	\$73,118	138
Vernon	\$69,989	146
Enfield	\$64,115	155
State	\$114,514	NA

Source: Connecticut Policy and Economic Council

To compare tax bases between communities with different revaluation schedules, an Equalized Net Grand List (ENGL) estimates the full market value of all taxable property in a given year based on actual sales. Ellington's 2001 per capita ENGL ranked 4th among the nine neighboring communities and 117th among 169 communities statewide. Ellington's per capita ENGL, as well as all of the neighboring towns, fell below the statewide average.

Preliminary Issue Identification

The Buildout Study of 2002 identified a number issues related to the growth and development of Ellington. Those issues are summarized below under the three functional headings of Conservation, Development, and Infrastructure.

Conservation Issues

- Continuation of rural character
- Preservation of Farms and Farmland
- Preservation of Open Space
- Protection of natural environment

Development Issues

- Aesthetics of new commercial development
- Preservation of main street village area
- Tax base and economic development opportunities & constraints
- One-size zoning, 40,000 square foot lots – not conducive to addressing identified issues.
- Zoning standards need to match natural constraints of the land
- Minimize negative environmental impacts

Infrastructure Issues

- Desire to continue high level of public services and quality facilities
- Traffic circulation, especially east/west circulation
- Ellington has limited sewer service areas & treatment capacity. Use of sewers should be focused on economic development & tax base growth.

These issues will serve as building blocks for the identification of additional issues likely to come to the fore as Ellington's future growth occurs.

Notes & Comments

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